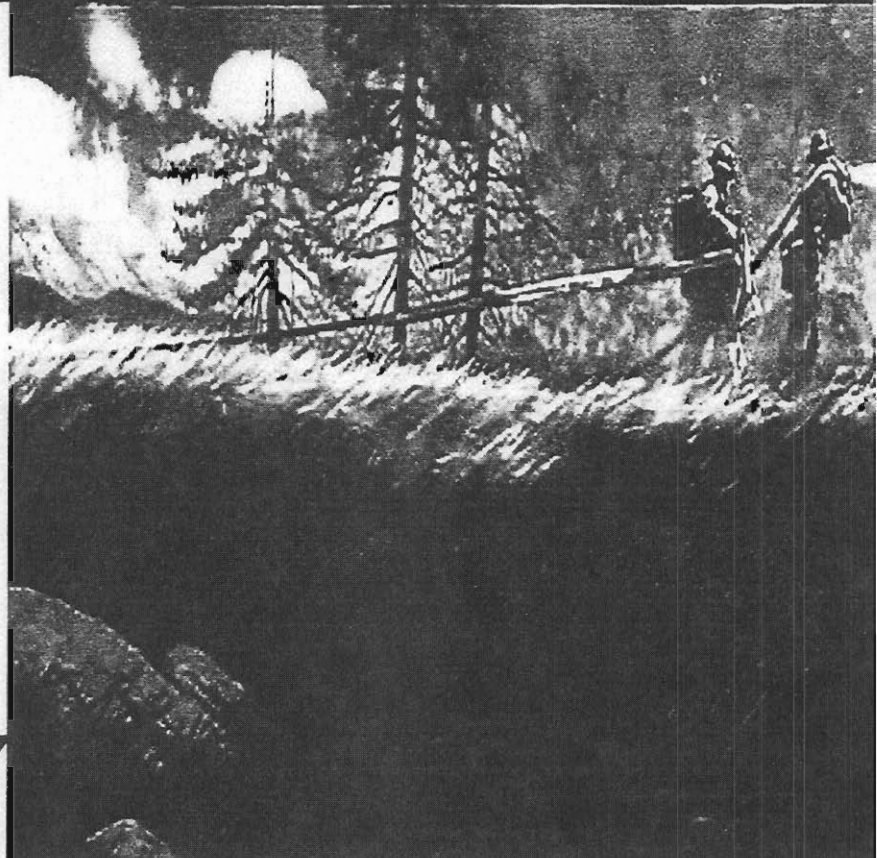


Wildland Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Amendment

*Washington
County
Idaho
WUI
Wildfire
Mitigation
Plan
Amendment
February 2007*



This Plan Amendment was developed by the Washington County
land Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee in coop
tion with the West Central Highlands RC&D, Boise District BLM,
ette National Forest, Idaho Department of Lands, and EnviroS Co
ants, 10077 West Meadowlark St., Boise, Idaho 44870

AMENDMENT 2007
WASHINGTON COUNTY IDAHO
WUI INTERFACE
FIRE MITIGATION PLAN
February 2007

When the Washington County Fire Mitigation Plan Team initially prepared our fire mitigation plan for Washington County, Idaho, the focus was on individual homeowners, subdivisions, fire resources and equipment that were present for fire protection, and on the wildfire requirements of an all hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan as defined by FEMA. There was an overall focus on existing resources in proximity to the dominant vegetation of the county which is range grassland and farm land. While the habitat has not changed with population growth, city and county fire districts and resource needs have changed dramatically.

Because of the need to amend and update our existing fire mitigation plan and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) maps for Washington County, our team met in November, 2005 and conducted a collaborative effort to receive input for this amendment. Our collaborative effort has resulted in new planning, WUI map updating and mitigation needs documentation directed not only at individual cities and communities but also at rangelands, farmlands, subdivision areas at high risk from fire, educational needs and new grant funding needs.

After the Washington County Fire Mitigation Plan was completed in 2004, new national legislation, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) was passed by Congress in 2003 and made available to states and communities in early 2004. Community Wildfire Prevention (CWPP) guidance came out in March 2004, while counties in Idaho were finalizing mitigation plans. Based on this new legislation, our Washington County Fire Mitigation Team defined our "Wildland Urban Interface", with the cooperation of federal and state management agencies and HFRA definitions.

We decided in November 2005 that a series of collaborative meetings were needed to update and change our Fire Mitigation Plan. These meetings began in February 2006 and continued through May 2006. We are very serious about our collaborative work with federal and fire management agencies in accomplishing hazardous fuels reduction treatments, fire education, and updating our Fire Mitigation Plan.

As part of our planning process, fire mitigation projects have been evaluated for current priority. These revisions and reprioritization coincided with new WUI mapping by the Washington District of the BLM for inclusion in the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) Fire Mitigation website. We have also documented all parties that have been involved in the amendment process and our Fire Mitigation Plan update meetings so that the collaborative nature of our effort can be demonstrated.

1. WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE (WUI) DEFINED FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY

Fuel modification work to protect habitats, cities and subdivisions throughout Washington County was defined in our original Fire Mitigation Plan and has been a basis for applications to accomplish hazardous fuels mitigation work. In addition, an external buffer within which modifications of rangeland fuels would reinforce this work and help ensure success in the event of a catastrophic wildfire is defined as the perimeter of the urban interface.

WUI perimeters, or defensible space, around home sites in urban or rural areas will be defined with fuel type and terrain based on updated WUI maps. The WUI map will determine defensible space perimeters for fire protection. Additional important factors used to determine defensible space will be weather conditions including wind, humidity and temperature.

Infrastructure also includes power and communication lines and towers, transportation for ingress, egress, and evacuation, rail lines and watersheds where citizen groups are organized for joint collection of water for domestic uses. In instances where topography is immediately outside the WUI defense zone would allow "anchoring" to good fire protection points, such as ridge tops or roads, the zone will be extended to that anchor point. The determination of "best" location of the boundary of the WUI defense zone is dependent on site situations, a mapped boundary will be created. Individual project planners will determine where this boundary will lie, in conformance with this written definition.

This "perimeter" definition will be useful to agencies in their efforts to continue hazardous fuels reduction projects that would make the protection of human habitations with the interface easier and safer.

2. WUI RATIONALE FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY

Humans and their habitats are at greatest risk from catastrophic wildfire in periods that show extreme fire behavior. The observed fire behavior of rapid rate of spread, and heavy fuel loading in recent fires near urban communities of Washington County indicates that a component of risk exposure is created by a combination of rate-of-spread and fuel load. These fuel models.

Recent fires in Washington County have had a tremendous rate of spread, ranging from one acre to several hundred acres per hour. We need adequate fuels modification work to successfully protect habitat and infrastructure in cities and rural fire districts like Milwaukie, Cambridge, Mann Creek, Brownlee Reservoir and Weiser, to reduce heavy light fuel load conditions. A WUI designated perimeter around cities and communities at risk from catastrophic fire is needed. Hazardous fuels modification in the buffer zone would contribute tremendously to the effectiveness of current Firesafe work around individual home sites.

HFRA allows County managers to treat hazardous fuels along evacuation routes that have been identified in project area fire mitigation plans under "Develop and Post FEMA Emergency Evacuation Routes". Treatment of these corridors will be a priority. Roads and rail corridors are major sources of ignition in Washington County. HFRA also provides communities/counties the flexibility to define their own WUI. Washington County has defined its WUI based on collaborative input, and the County's CWPP boundary definition is the same as its WUI boundary.

As noted in our original plan, transportation routes for successful evacuation of residents at the same time fire crews and equipment are being deployed during a catastrophe are critical throughout Washington County. Hazardous fuels treatments within the two mile zone along any of these routes would greatly reduce the potential that the routes would be cut off during an event.

3. INTEROPERABILITY

Interoperability, the ability for on-scene fire, medical and law enforcement units to immediately communicate with each other, is vital in the mitigation of emergency events. Present and future mutual aid and automatic agreements to utilize closest appropriate resources require the ability to quickly establish radio communications with all other responding units for the planning and execution of the established mitigation plan. We will need to continue to pursue mutual aid agreements to improve communication.

4. WASHINGTON COUNTY FIRE UPDATE/NEEDS:

Additional Goals

Follow up to see that the County addressing program is completed, road name signs brought up to code and installed as needed.

Form new fire districts where needed.

Maintain the goals set in the 2004 mitigation plan.

Work with the public in education of wildland fires.

Work towards the funding of additional fire equipment needs.

Work towards a county-wide burn permit policy.

Map Update

Work with Boise District BLM on WUI mapping needs.

Material needs

Purchase firewise materials for fire prevention programs.

Infrastructure Updates

Upgrade highway bridges to carry the weight of fire department water tenders, post weight at all of the bridges in County, install dry fire hydrants at strategic locations.

Section 4.5 domestic water supplies, city of Weiser also draws water from the Snake River

Rangeland Fire Education Needs

Conduct county-wide community firewise training for homeowners, decision makers, and After the fire year of 2005 the County will be expanding the fire education program.

Put in place an education program in the high schools about wild land fires.

New Growth, Subdivisions, Structures, Homes

We are seeing 50 plus new homes each year in the Weiser Rural Fire District.

Need to address new building codes for fire resistant materials.

Educate people moving into fire district about firewise programs.

Grants, Funding Assistance, Training

We have been applying for Idaho Department of Lands grants, Homeland Security AFG, 1 grants, Idaho Fire Chiefs grants.

Additional Areas

Expand the fire reporting #FIRE program throughout the County.

Continue to work with County homeowners to identify risks and provide recommendation reducing fire risks.

Effects of Historic Fire Events, New Fire Effects

Fires in the County burned in areas that have a strong history of burning in the past. Only education can the fire danger be reduced.

Several large wildland-urban interface fires occurred in 2005-2006 within Washington The Monroe Creek Fire occurred on July 19th and burned 3427 acres on private and ground. This fire threatened numerous private residences north of Weiser and required air and ground suppression resources from Forest Service, BLM, as well as numerous local city fire departments to protect threatened structures and suppress the fire.

On July 28th the Snake One fire started and burned 25,280 acres approximately 18 miles north of Weiser. This fire tested the capabilities of firefighters by burning in very steep terrain threatening numerous private land holdings and grazing allotments.

New Small Communities/Rural Fire Districts

No new communities or districts added.

Washington Rural Fire District attempted to annex portion of Washington County close to County line, but was not successful.

High Risk Areas

Work on fuels reduction programs with landowners. Look for possible funding sources

Issues for Fire Protection

Adopt WUI building codes throughout County, implement access roads and turn a route that don't have fire districts.

Provide Firewise training for communities within the County.

Main issues for fire protection throughout the County are still education and equipment

Fire District Updates (Resources)

Weiser Rural Fire District added a 2005 Wildland/Structure Pumper 1250gpm, 10' tank with class A foam.

The 1968 Gi Truck was decommissioned.

Transfer 1982 GMC/FMC Pumper to station #2 at Jackson Rd.

New Treatments, Additions (burns, Vegetative Control, etc.)

Contact Idaho Power to control vegetation under high voltage power lines that crisscross County.

Sturgill/Benton Burn. Project completed 2003. Drop from WUI Plan.

East Fork Brownlee Burn. Implementation time frame fall 2008 – 2010.

No Business Natural Fuels. Dropped due to lack of funding.

Cottonwood/Westfork. Implementation time frame fall 2006 – 2008.

Mann Creek Natural Fuels. Updated Acres: 4500. Implementation time frame fall 2006

No other changes.

Pole/Mill Creek Natural Fuels. Updated acres: 2000. No other changes.

West Pine Restoration. No changes

Update County Wide Recommendations & Activities (5.1)

Most of these are still on going, we discussed removing the target dates, 5.1.e, 5.1.i, a completed or very close to completed. 5.2 5.3 discussed removing dates and make ongoing Need for development and improvement in interagency mutual aid cooperative agreements annual operating plans between federal (Forest Service and BLM), state, county and departments to more clearly define roles during fire suppression efforts on multi jurisdiction incidents and in cases of mutual aid.

A very aggressive fire prevention program should be continued.

Radio communications need to be updated.

Additional Supporting Information

2005-2006 was a very busy fire season in the County, we need to be more aggressive on implementing action items already listed. Advisory group will need to meet and set a priority present to county commissioners.

Funding Equipment needs along with dispatch and radio communications along with coordinating addressing updates need most of our support.

5. SIGNATURE PAGES

This Amended Washington County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation has been reviewed in cooperation and collaboration with the representatives of the following organizations, agencies and individuals.



By: Diana Thomas
Washington County Commissioner

3-19-07

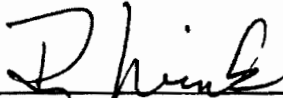
Date



By: Rick Michael, Chairman
Washington County Commissioner

3-19-07

Date



Roy Mink
Washington County Commissioner

3-19-07

Date



Steve Patterson, Mayor
City of Weiser

02-21-07

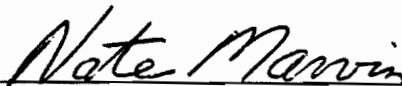
Date



By: Scott Williamson, Chief
Weiser City Fire Department

3-19-07

Date



By: Nate Marvin, Chief
Weiser Rural Fire District #1

02/20/07

Date



Dick Smith, Chair
Weiser Rural Fire District #1

3-23-07

Date

Mary Farnsworth
By: ~~Bill Gamble~~, Acting Ranger
Weiser Ranger District, Payette National Forest

4/6/07
Date

Rosemary Thomas ✓
By: Rosemary Thomas, Field Manager
Four Rivers Field Office, BLM

4/6/07
Date

Dean Page ✓
By: Dean Page, Chief
Cambridge Fire District

Date

John Sachtjen
By: John Sachtjen, Chair
Cambridge Rural Fire Department

7-23-0
Date

Galen M. Lewis
By: Galen Lewis, Chief
Midvale Rural Fire Department

3-14-
Date

Harmon Horton
By: Harmon Horton, Chair
Midvale Rural Fire Department

3-14-07
Date

Sheldon M. Keafer
By: Sheldon Keafer, Area Supervisor
Idaho Department of Lands-Payette Lakes

4/30/07
Date

Morris Huffman ✓
By: Morris Huffman, Chairman
West Central Highlands RC&D

5/9/07
Date

Danny J. Ebert ✓
By: Danny J. Ebert
Project Leader, Washington County WUI
Wildfire Mitigation Plan Amendment,
Lead Author
Enviro Consultants

5/9/07
Date